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Agenda item 96 (a)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/50/618/Add.1)]

50/112. Elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/172 of 19 December 1989 and 44/228 of 22 December 1989 and its other relevant resolutions and decisions, and the recommendations made in Agenda 21, 1/ adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Recalling also its resolution 47/188 of 22 December 1992, by which it decided to establish the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,

Recalling further its resolution 49/234 of 23 December 1994, in which it decided that the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee should continue to function in order, inter alia, to prepare for the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, as specified in the United

1/ See Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26/Rev. 1 (Vol. I and Vol. I/Corr.1, Vol. II, Vol. III and Vol. III/Corr.1) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions Adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.

Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, 2/

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 49/234 3/ and on possible requirements for intergovernmental and secretariat work on the implementation of the Convention and its regional implementation annexes, 4/ and having also considered Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee resolution 7/1 of 17 August 1995 5/ on dates and venue of the sessions of the Committee during the period up to and including the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention,

Expressing its concern about the present level of the Special Voluntary Fund for participation in the negotiation process of developing countries affected by desertification and drought, in particular the least developed countries,

Noting that the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee has established two working groups in order to be able to discharge its responsibilities in the preparation for the first session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention,

Expressing its concern about the present level of the Trust Fund, established pursuant to its resolution 47/188, to support the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee and the interim secretariat,

Considering that the Convention is one of the main steps in the implementation and follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

1. Welcomes the signing of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, 2/ by a large number of States and one regional economic integration organization and the ratification of the Convention by a growing number of States, and urges States that have not yet signed or ratified the Convention to do so, so that it may enter into force as soon as possible;

2. Decides that the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, shall continue to prepare for the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention as specified in the Convention;

3. Also decides, for this purpose, to convene two sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee in 1996, each of up to two weeks'

2/ A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.

3/ A/50/515.

4/ A/50/347.

5/ See A/50/74/Add.1, annex, appendix II.

duration, the eighth session to be held at Geneva from 5 to 16 February and the ninth session in New York from 3 to 13 September;

4. Further decides to convene the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, which is to be held in New York from 6 to 17 January 1997 and, pending the entry into force of the Convention, to convene, as necessary, a further session of the Committee in 1997, of up to two weeks' duration, the exact dates and venue of which shall be determined at a later stage;

5. Recommends that, upon the entry into force of the Convention, a session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention be convened in the second and third weeks of June 1997 or, alternatively, in the second and third weeks of August 1997, the exact dates and venue of the session to be determined at a later stage;

6. Requests all countries, the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, relevant subregional and regional organizations, appropriate scientific and business communities, trade unions, relevant non-governmental organizations and other interested groups, to take action for the prompt implementation of the Convention and its relevant regional implementation annexes 6/ upon its entry into force and in this regard to respond effectively to the needs in the African, Asian and Latin American and Caribbean regions;

7. Urges all countries, the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, relevant subregional and regional organizations and all other relevant actors to undertake actions and measures for the full and effective implementation of the provisions of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee resolution 5/1 of 17 June 1994 on urgent action for Africa, 7/ as well as to promote actions for other affected developing countries and regions, and invites all States to continue to communicate to the interim secretariat of the Convention, in addition to the information they have already provided, information on actions undertaken and/or envisaged for the implementation of the provisions of resolution 5/1;

8. Decides that the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee and the interim secretariat shall continue to be funded through existing United Nations budgetary resources, without negatively affecting its programmed activities, and through voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/188 specifically for that purpose and administered by the head of the interim secretariat under the authority of the Secretary-General, with the possibility of using the Fund, as appropriate, to support the participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations in the work of the Committee and of carrying over resources contributed from one fiscal year to the other;

9. Urges States, regional economic integration organizations and other interested organizations to reinforce the capacity of the interim secretariat of the Convention through substantial contributions to the Trust Fund;

6/ A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II, annexes I-IV.

7/ See A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix III, sect. A.

10. Renews its appeals to Governments, regional economic integration organizations and other interested organizations, including non-governmental organizations, to make early contributions to the Special Voluntary Fund in order to ensure an enhanced effective participation in the negotiation process of developing countries affected by desertification and/or drought, in particular the least developed countries;

11. Notes the arrangements and contributions made by the Secretary-General and relevant organizations active in the fields of desertification, drought and development, including the United Nations Development Programme/Office to Combat Desertification and Drought, 8/ the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Bank, as regards the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee and the interim secretariat in the conduct of their mandate, and invites them to intensify and expand such support and collaboration in the future, as appropriate;

12. Also notes the arrangements concluded between the interim secretariat of the Convention and the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Meteorological Organization, whereby appropriate actions are taken for an active collaboration and support of activities at the national and regional levels in affected developing countries, in particular those in Africa, and the least developed countries;

13. Requests the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to submit progress reports on the work of the Committee to the General Assembly, the Commission on Sustainable Development and other appropriate bodies of the United Nations;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Governments, the relevant specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations, international financial institutions, other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other relevant institutions;

15. Also requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution relative to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, under the item entitled "Implementation of decisions and recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development".

96th plenary meeting
20 December 1995

8/ Formerly, United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO). The acronym UNSO is retained with the new name.